UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General returns to New York after four-day visit to Central America and Caribbean.

+ UNMIH reports uneventful weekend following take-over from Multinational Force in Haiti.

+ UNPROFOR notes increased fighting in Bihac pocket, and some shelling of safe area, but relative quiet elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ General Assembly approves financing of UNMIH, UNMOT and UNIKOM; elections to World Court to be held on 21 June and 12 July.

+ Administrative and Budgetary Committee approves authorization of almost $34 million for MINURSO for seven-month period.

+ Commission on Status of Women urges release of all women and children held hostage.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali returned to New York this afternoon, having concluded a four-day visit to Central America and the Caribbean. This morning, he visited the headquarters of the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights in Guatemala (MINUGUA) and met with Director Leonardo Franco.

The Secretary-General met earlier in the day with the leaders of the Assembly of the Civil Society, and handed over to them the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous People, which was signed in Mexico City on Friday. He also met with Nobel Laureate Rigoberta Menchu.

In El Salvador yesterday, the Secretary-General had separate meetings with representatives of the Government and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN). He also met with heads of United Nations agencies in El Salvador and of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL). The Secretary-General was in Honduras on Saturday, where he met

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with President Carlos Reina, and was presented with the Order of Jose Cecilio del Valle.

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The weekend passed quietly for the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), which took over from the United States-led Multinational Force on Friday, according to a spokesman for the Organization. The Mission has been fully deployed, having absorbed some 3,800 of the 7,000 troops in the Multinational Force.

The spokesman noted that voter registration for the June elections was underway in all departments of Haiti.

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The United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) also had a quiet weekend, the spokesman noted. Thorvald Stoltenberg, Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, had several meetings with the parties concerned today, and hoped to secure agreement on details of the operational plan for UNCRO's new mandate.

Meanwhile in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) reported increased fighting in the Bihac pocket. There was some shelling of the safe area, although it appeared to be random and caused no casualties. However, there was relatively little activity elsewhere in the country.

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The General Assembly has appropriated almost $152 million gross to maintain the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) from 1 February to 31 July 1995. It also appropriated almost $6 million for the period 1 August to 31 January 1995, and $44,200 for 1 to 31 July 1994.

In another action on Friday, the Assembly approved $10 million for the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for the period 27 April 1995 to 30 June 1996, should the Security Council extend the Mission's mandate. It also appropriated more than $3 million for the period 16 December 1994 to 26 April 1995. The Assembly provisionally approved $12 million for the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) from 1 April to 30 June 1995, subject to the extension of its mandate.

In another action, on questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, the Assembly decided to keep under review the level of support costs charged to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research; to take note of the Secretary General's report on the pension scheme for members of the International Court of Justice; and to request the Secretary General to proceed with the establishment of a unified conference servicing facility at the Vienna International Centre under the management of the United Nations.

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The Assembly also decided to hold an election on 21 June to fill a vacancy on the International Court of Justice resulting from the death on 24 February of Justice Roberto Ago of Italy. The new member of the Court will serve the remainder of Judge Ago's term, which expires 5 February 1997. Another election will be held on 12 July to fill the vacancy resulting from the resignation of Judge Sir Robert Yewdall Jennings of the United Kingdom.

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The Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) has approved a draft resolution which would authorize the Secretary-General to commit up to $34 million gross for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for the period 1 December 1994 to 30 June 1995. That amount would include $29 million for the period from 1 December 1994 to 31 May 1995, and $5 million for the period 1 to 30 June 1995, if the Security Council extends the Mission's mandate beyond 31 May.

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The Commission on the Status of Women has urged the release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts before the opening of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing on 4 September. In a resolution adopted on Friday, the Commission asked the Secretary-General and international agencies to help facilitate the release of those women and children. It took that action by 27 votes in favour to none against, with 14 abstentions.

The Commission requested the Secretary-General to inform the World Conference on progress made in implementing the resolution.

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